

THE CITIZEN AND ADMINISTRATION

PERCEPTIONS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE OFFICIALS

Preliminary Report on Some Aspects of a Sample Survey in Delhi State, 1964



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Part A

APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF CITIZEN-ADMINISTRATION RELATIONSHIPS

by

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1. ^{Ruler} Citizens - Regular Complex in a Democracy

India is a democratic republic and "the craftsmanship of democratic government is essentially a social skill." Ever since the time of Aristotle the emphasis of democratic government has been upon citizens' participation in government through sharing the responsibilities of office. The citizens and administrators are not two separate entities but they are the same set of people playing different roles in different capacities. Aristotle attributes "practical wisdom" as the characteristic of the ruler and "true opinion" as the virtue of the subject.

Shri Srinivas Sastry aptly described that "in a democratic system of Government no man is free from responsibility, which is exactly proportional to each man's capacity, to his education, to his experience in life, to his disinterestedness, to his capacity of leadership - in brief, to his equipment for effective action in the great struggle that is continually going on to determine the preponderance of good and bad forces in government, and upon the issue on which depend results so momentous to himself and his family, his children, and his country and mankind.

The realisation of this role of the citizen in government in a democracy is a function of civic traditions and political leadership. In the same way as the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy are increasing, the functions of government also are growing in quantity, quality and novelty. For example, the concept of Welfare carries in it the responsibility to provide services from womb to tomb including such tasks as maternity and child welfare, education and employment, industrial peace and social security, capital investment and balance of trade, minimum production and distribution of wealth ensuring a minimum standard of life for all. The fulfilment of these tasks in a democratic planned manner is something new to all States and particularly to States which recently emerged into independence after centuries of foreign rule and feudal traditions. In this context the expectations of citizens as regards the functions and services from Government are high while the resources and capacities of administration do not match the expectations. There is, therefore, a gulf between the expectations and realities and a lag between the cherished aspirations and actual abilities to achieve them. Notwithstanding the fact that citizens and administrators are two facets of the Government, there is a tendency to blame the administration for the short falls in achievements. In India this blame has a new dimension since independence because of the high expectations raised during the struggle for independence and also because there is no one to shift the blame from ourselves to others. It is therefore necessary to put in proper perspective the problem of citizen-administration relationships.

Administration is a way of organising and executing functions over a vast area for the development of human and material resources. The goal is that of the welfare state or better to say, a welfare society; the process is democratic planning and the instrument is administration - both governmental at federal, state and local levels, and non-governmental, i.e. industry, agriculture, business, and social organisations etc. These tasks have to be fulfilled by the existing leadership, in political, economic, social and administrative fields. The public servants and the public are to adapt themselves to the challenging responsibilities set by the welfare State goal, democratic planned process and administration as the instrument of change. Whenever motivational, institutional or procedural deficiencies were discovered, these were sought to be set right by appropriate ad-hoc measures. This does not seem to be satisfactory because the expected results are not forthcoming. For this reason major reforms in administration are considered necessary. This augurs well provided the true character of administration and the numerous complexities underlying administrative reforms are clearly perceived.

Citizen Commitment crucial to Administration

Administration is a circular process ranging from initial formulation of policy and its implementation to a modification of it consequent upon an evaluation of its implementation. This continuous dynamic process could be regarded the subject matter of administration. If so, where should we search for the strengths and weaknesses of administra-

citizens towards the goals of the welfare State? To discover these strengths and weaknesses in administration, we should start with the concept of the double role of citizens (1) as producers and consumers of goods and services in public and private sectors, and (2) citizens as rulers and subjects working in and out of office. From the ranks of citizens come political and business leaders, public and social servants and the critiques and beneficiaries of socio-economic development activities. The first task of any administrative reforms is to examine the extent of commitment of the people at large to the goal of the welfare state, to the democratic planned process and to the role of administration as an agent of change. The concept of commitment could not be inferred from the success at the polls of the party professing this triple policy. (The commitment of the bulk of the people would mean an understanding of the goals of welfare state, an awareness of the means and resources for achievement and a preparedness to work to produce the resources to reach the goals.) The extent of deficiencies in commitment in the bulk of the people determine the limitations upon the capacity of administration to fulfil its role as an agent of change because in a democracy the administration could not be much ahead of the people in the same way as the level of the river could not be higher than at its source. The degree of commitment is an indication of the collective will and the determination of the nation.

3) Requirements of Democratic Administration:--

Administration, like money, is universal in a modern democratic socialist society in which big business, and big government vie with one another to reach the people through the market mechanism or

community services. The size and functions of administration in a socialist or a welfare state and developing societies are constantly growing and therefore the nineteenth century conflict between the state and the citizen is becoming less prominent. On the contrary, a recent study by the P.E.P. aptly remarked that "the simple division between government and governed is no longer adequate." Mr. Mackenzie supports this view when he said that: "The Central administration is not isolated from the community, but entangled in it everywhere, in office hours and out of them." Bigness in size and complexity of functions result in specialization making coordination a separate specialized function. Coordination eludes our grasp because it is either present or not present among the people as a cultural characteristic and mechanical devices of coordination do not help much to create an impact if the temperament to work as a team is not ingrained among the people. The lack of coordination impedes the flow of work, causes delays, promotes red-tapism and encourages "buck passing". Under these circumstances inherent to all big and complex organizations, administration tends to "divide people into departmental slices instead of treating them as unity." Just as steps are taken to control the flow of money with a view to maintain a steady rise in the standard of life, so also steps should be taken to regulate the flow of work in administration with a view to enable the people to produce and enjoy the goods and services appropriate for the democratically planned welfare state ideal. Administration should be judged not merely by its size and cost but by the way it exercises its power within limits that are acceptable to the nation

as a whole.¹ Monsieur Pujet suggested the following criteria for determining whether an administration is democratic.² (1) It must be open in the sense of having wide contacts with the people. For this purpose a) it must not operate in the interest of the ruler or of a directing class; b) it must be recruited without discrimination from a very broad social strata; c) it must maintain contact with the public through consultation, inquiries and procedures which enable it to be aware of the state of mind of the governed; d) it must avoid an arrogant disposition.

2) It must be controlled not only by an official hierarchy or the jurisdictional power (that is, the right of review given to the administrative tribunals) but also by public opinion and public liberties, such as the freedom of the press, the right of association and the right of demonstration.

3) Administrative power must be subordinate and submissive:

a) administrative power should not exist independently of political power; b) civil servants must not be completely subordinate and the administration must be independent of interference by political parties; c) a political party in power should not try to monopolize all the jobs or to exercise pressure on responsible civil servants; d) the principle of continuity of administration must be maintained."

↓ Professor R. Aron, a well known French Sociologist, mentions the essential criteria of democracy in administration to include

1. Vide Charles S. Hyneman: Bureaucracy in a Democracy, Harper & Bros: 1950, pp. 5-6 N.Y.

2. C.f.: William A. Robson (Ed.) The Civil Service in Britain and France, The Hogarth Press, London, 1956, pp. 5-6.

decentralization; the subordination of administration to policies which reflect the desires of the people; and a friendly attitude on the part of officials towards the governed.)

While these norms are incontrovertible, the degree of their realisation in practice is determined by a number of socio-economic factors and cultural traditions. A State of full employment and affluence could afford to ignore lapses from the above norms without much damage to democracy or efficiency in administration while a state of developing economy demands a highly competent good administration to reform bad administration and bring about the desired degree of development.³

Further, the State of full employment and affluence are also products of qualities which ensure the above type of democratic administration. Developing countries are therefore confronted with an egg and hen puzzle to resolve which is the problem before the administrative reforms conference.

4. Centralization-Decentralization trends and traditions in Administration

Administration is tradition-bound and culture-based and as such we should examine the administrative tradition in India before we could introduce innovations. Centralization and personality polarisation seem to be two main characteristics of administrative tradition in India. Besides these, the methods and procedures in the present administration were inherited from and based upon distrust by the foreign

3. H.W. Singer : International Development Growth and Change, p. 57. McGraw Hill Book Co., 1964.

government of the indigenous personnel and they were intended more to check than release enthusiasm for the exercise of responsibility in a creative way. When today the leaders are introducing schemes of democratic - decentralization and delegation of authority and responsibility, the reforms in institutional framework should have been preceded or accompanied by appropriate reforms in methods and procedures, manuals and codes which would enable the exercise of responsibility with confidence and trust. The adherence to the procedures of a police state to achieve the goals of a welfare state is the greatest desideratum in administration. This aspect deserves scrutiny to be accompanied by appropriate reforms. Even though there is awareness of the need for reform, it is stopped by the difficulties of selecting strategic areas and starting points of reform in the jungle of administration spread over the length and breadth of the country. A radical step was taken when the scheme of democratic decentralisation was suggested and later implemented but reviews of the schemes disclose that political decentralization and structural reforms are not adequate to fight against the trend and tradition of centralization, to establish a consensus between the elected and appointed executives or to bring about a genuine autonomy, delegation of authority and exercise of responsibility.) A big area for research and reform is the field of Centralization vs. Decentralization. If the experiment of decentralization is given a fair trial and if the pre-conditions for its success are imaginatively identified and earnestly fulfilled, it may be able to remedy a few maladies of administration such as alienation, red tapism, corruption and discourtesy.

Even after establishing decentralized democratic institutions, many problems remain because (the pathological phenomena in administration are universal. These are brought about by the growing technicalities and complexities in administrative organisation, the increasing class and cultural gulf between the governors and the governed and the mounting indifference of the citizen towards participation in government balanced only by the supreme indifference to service accelerated by a wage earner's approach and trade unionism among the middle and lower levels of civil servants. Curiously, administration is now identified with bureaucracy which at one time was an unpopular word for a popular thing namely administration. Prof. W.A. Robson's following observation is most applicable to the situation in India: "The man in the street, the journalist and most politicians persist in regarding bureaucracy as synonymous with the maladies from which it sometimes suffers." Bureaucracy is no doubt indispensable and an essential handle for government to work with; but, as in man, so in administration, the citizens are unappreciative of the long period of health but become conscious of its value only when disease affects them; similarly maladies of administration, which are many, spur the citizen to become conscious of the contingent evils in administration which threaten to destroy the healthy administration when perpetual vigilance is relaxed.

5. Maladies in administration

W.A. Robson lists the following as the "maladies from which bureaucracy most frequently suffers:" an excessive sense of self-importance on the part of officials or an undue idea of the importance on the part

of officials or an undue idea of the importance of their office; an indifference towards the feelings or the convenience of individual citizens; an obsession with the binding and inflexible authority of departmental decisions, precedents, arrangements or forms, regardless of how badly or with what injustice they may work in individual cases; a mania for regulations and formal procedure; a preoccupation with the activities of particular units of administration and an inability to consider the government as a whole; a failure to recognize the relations between the governors and the governed as an essential part of the democratic process."⁴ The Report of the Committee on the Training of Civil Servants commented on the characteristics of bureaucrats as follows: "The faults most frequently enumerated are over-devotion to precedent; remoteness from the rest of the community, inaccessibility and faulty handling of the general public, lack of initiative and imagination, ineffective organisation and waste of manpower, procrastination and unwillingness to take responsibility or to give decisions." These universal maladies of bureaucracy are sharpened in India by the language barrier. Till recently and probably even today in most parts of the country, English which is foreign to all and is not known to more than ninety percent of the people is the language of administration. In his dealings with administration the "English illiterates", albeit being literate or learned in Indian languages, have to depend upon translating

4. William A. Robson (Ed.) The Civil Service in Britain & France, The Hogarth Press, London, 1956, p. 13.

middlemen or the personal sympathy of the public servants whom they approach for service. This disability of language barrier contributes a great deal to the snobbery and exploitation of officials of the ignorant lay people.

The language barrier also projects as a class-culture barrier. The English educated elite, especially those educated abroad, observe and imbibe certain values of life and means of living which the common people could not aspire or appreciate. The elite who form the policy makers become distinguished by an "alien spirit" in their approach to policies and administration. In this respect, the "non-westernized" elected executives, namely, the politicians at all levels, suffer from varying degrees of absence of "consensus and idem" with the top level permanent executives. Even though the latter, for the sake of expediency, approve of the policies, of the elected representatives it is difficult for them to commit themselves wholeheartedly and become "missionaries of change." This class barrier was felt even in countries like England also in the transformation of the capitalist to a socialist state with a civil service brought up in the former ethic. This impediment was particularly felt by the Labour Government in the expansion and administration of the social services and social security programmes because the "establishment" and the working class live as two nations in the same country.

6. Citizens' Image of Administration

Arising out of the heritage of administration from the colonial period and the maladies of administration in a complex industrial society and Welfare State the citizens in developing countries are said to

entertain the following image of a bureaucrat: "He is at various times:-
 a) a perverse God who must be propitiated; b) a recalcitrant ass that must be driven; c) a privileged snob, impossible to get the better of; d) a lazy hound, impossible to bring to book; and e) (occasionally) a hard-worked, underpaid and harassed officer doing his best under difficult circumstances. This last is likely to be a judgement by and of, upper-class layers and no doubt often coincides with the self-image of the high ranking public servant."⁵ This generalized image could not be true of all citizens of various types, interests and cultures. It would also be of interest to speculate as to what an administrator thinks as a citizen of other administrators. The citizens' impression of administration as given above may be said to reflect a cross section of opinion from the elite to the ignorant man.

Two factors that affect or influence the common man's impression are 1) the behaviour of the servant to the citizen and 2) the content of decision or service the citizen gets from the servant. Prof. Robson rightly observes that the manner in which a citizen is treated by a public authority may be as important in determining his attitude as the decision itself.⁶ He further remarks: "There is nothing more infuriating than arrogance or conceit on the part of an official, while a friendly and helpful attitude can leave a favourable impression of a lasting nature. This is true even though the behaviour of the official may not

5. C.R. Hensman (ED). The Public Services and the People : In Community No.3, p. 44.

6. William A. Robson: The Governors and the Governed, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1964, p. 20.

in either case affect the decision or the action of the public authority concerned."⁷

7. Administrators' Image of Citizens

There appears to be an over-emphasis upon pillorying the administrator without much consideration for his views about the citizens' role in administration. Good government is a function of the two sides of the Government namely citizens and administrators. We often ignore to recognise the double role of citizens:

1. as representatives elected by the people and put in responsible positions as Ministers or Members of committees and Commissions holding positions of trust, competence and service; and
2. as tax payers and beneficiaries not only enabling the government to provide services but act as watch dogs so that the Government provides courteous and efficient service.

Administrators have two complaints on these aspects: 1) meddling interference by legislators and political executives and 2) the apathy of common citizens and their parasitism on government. The substance of these complaints deserves to be investigated and evaluated. The interference by the political executives or representatives should be examined in the cultural background of each nation rather than merely from the stereotypes of an advanced traditional democratic country. Political interference and corruption are considered by some to be fulfilling an 'entrepreneurial' role in the development process of a country in which the electorate is inarticulate and unsophisticated.

7. Ibid

A seminar study goes to the extent of saying: "Political interference and corruption are the price we have to pay for persisting with a public service and with laws and regulations which were imposed upon people and about changing which very little is done since independence."⁸ The traditional role of policy making by political executives and administration by the permanent executives, the traditional concepts of the policy and programme neutrality of public servants and impersonal execution of programmes seem to call for revision and modification so as to meet the compulsions of "administration as an agent of socio-economic change" within a chosen political framework.

Administration is an art and developmental administration is much more so because it requires such administrator to be so resourceful as to press the scarce resources, both material and personnel, to go the longest way. The expectations as to these resourceful qualities of leadership from each administrator is hampered by two factors: 1) the steel frame he is bound by and 2) the different types of responses from the public he comes across. The steel frame leaves little scope for the exercise of initiative unless the entire personnel in administration is pervaded by an attitude of trust in the bonafides and competence in performance. This is yet a desideratum. While administrators look for active and intelligent cooperation through participation and suggestions for improvement, they get a public ignorant about administrative requirements and procedures, parasitic upon the government for goods and services.

8. The Public Services and the People, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

The administrators also come across citizens hostile and sabotaging the administrator's attempts to improve the socio-economic conditions. The large scale phenomenon of tax evasion and resource wastage, rioting by students and black-marketing by traders are a few illustrations of sabotage. These and other similar experiences of hindrances to good administration create a poor image of citizens among administrators.

More than all, the attitudes of citizens to administration are the most important. The following quotation, though long, from a thought provoking speech by Prof. Robson is particularly relevant in our country today: "The achievement of good relations between the government and the public is a matter which does not by any means depend solely on the conduct of civil servants and politicians. It depends equally on the attitude of citizens, groups, corporations, associations of all kinds and indeed of all unofficial bodies to public authorities. If we want public servants to behave well towards us we must behave well towards them. Moreover, we must normally assume that they for their part will behave well." Prof. Robson then refers to the adverse consequences of holding the administration in low esteem when he says: "If politicians and civil servants are held in low esteem; if their work is derided; if abuse, and invective is poured on them continuously; if loose and unsubstantial allegations are made about their incompetence, dishonesty, laziness and indifference to the public interest it is unlikely that officials will develop or display qualities of integrity, industry and public spirit." He observes that public esteem by itself does not transform a poor qualities civil servant into one of high quality,

"but it is certainly a potent factor in maintaining or achieving high standards of conduct and competence." Besides esteem, improvements in civil service outlook and competence should be simultaneously attempted and alongside with the improvements people should be kept informed of the unfair bias in their image of the civil service based upon an ignorance of the requirements and complexities of administration. The elimination or minimization of the unjust bias would become possible only when the communications and interplay of citizens and administrators become more free, intimate and easy. A suggestion made in this context is to broaden the basis of recruitment and training of civil servants and association of lay but competent people in the administration of programmes and projects. In other words there is need for a breakdown of barriers between citizens and administration with a view to bring about a greater integration of the civil service and the community. How to bring this about is an area for further study and research by behavioural scientists and administrators. A survey on "Citizen Administration - Mutual Perceptions in Delhi" recently conducted in Institute brings to light the curious phenomenon of high prestige but low esteem for government service. Many people expressed an eagerness to join government for the security it offers, for prospects of promotion it holds out but the people had a low opinion about the integrity of officials, courtesy towards citizens, efficiency in performance etc. By and large it appears that citizens consider Government as an instrument for career-promotion rather than an organized expression of the Community for achieving goals determined by the citizens at large. The identification of citizens

with the Government as their own agency for enlightened self development is yet to grow and become widespread.

Conclusion

A study of citizen administration relationships is marked by a complex pluralist phenomena because the citizens and their interests are multifarious; and administration is polyvalent and pervasive in a modern state. The new independent States which have old traditional cultures have to discover methods by which "administration can be made or kept democratic." For this discovery, and for verifying the maxim that people get the government they deserve, the following questions are posed for discussions:-

1. Is there a distance between the citizens and administrators? If so, how to bridge it?
2. Is there an alienation of administration from the citizens or how far is the "we and they" feeling a barrier in communication and accessibility between citizens and administrators?
3. What are the mutual images of administrator and citizens? Are they vitiated by distance and alienation from each other? How to remedy any unjust bias in the mutual images?
4. Could the maladies of administration be overcome by a greater degree of decentralization or multiplication of elected bodies at different levels?
5. Would the process of decentralization and multiplication of elected bodies favour or hinder development planning and its effective implementation?
6. Are the traditional theories and practices of administration appropriate for adoption in developing countries? If not, what modifications are needed?
7. What are the deficiencies in professional skills and attitudes of civil servants for fulfilling their responsibilities as instruments of socio-economic change?

8. What are the institutional and personal handicaps in the traditional cultures which stand in the way of securing the necessary citizen - administration co-operation for bringing about democratically planned development? In what manner could these handicaps be identified and overcome so as to make the citizens better rulers and rulers better citizens?

Part B

"The Citizen and Administration - A Sample Survey of Mutual Perceptions in Delhi - 1964".

Part I

The Background of the Survey:

The phrase cutting edge is understood in the working paper of the Administrative Reforms Conference held in the Institute in August 1963 as "the level at which a counter clerk deals with a common citizen in a public office". There is in the above working paper a reference to the suggestion that "hierarchical organisations lend themselves to this neglect of low levels of administration....." and further on, the working paper says, "under cover of hierarchy, decentralisation and delegation, the task of administration at the level of its "cutting edge" comes to be dealt with by low level functionaries, ill-equipped and ill-trained for the point of physical contact between the administration and the citizen". The following view is expressed about the calibre of the cutting edge level of administration. ✓ "As one descends down the hierarchical ladder, generally speaking, competence decreases, there is less resilience in administration; less wisdom in using judgment or discretion within the law or regulation; more rigidity and a tendency to be "authoritative". The paper poses the question: "What then are the principal lines along which administrative reform at these levels should be pursued so as to make the cutting edge of administration more efficient, more resilient and more responsive to the common citizen whom it seeks to serve"? After referring to such concepts as

"the age of institutions" it ends the topic with a pertinent question, "should we rather be prepared to make major changes and not be content with minor adjustments".

While the phrase "cutting edge" is an appealing analogy, it does not appear to be a self-explaining expression. It carries in it the image of a butcher and whether the edge is sharp or blunt it is unsatisfactory. Further, the statement that the lower the hierarchy the less the competence, wisdom etc. is a statement which needs to be understood with reference to the functions and qualifications prescribed for recruitment to the post of a particular salary grade under consideration. It is not clear whether at the 'cutting edge' level persons of higher calibre and emoluments deserve to be employed so as to create a better 'good will' for administration or whether better equipment and better training of the functionaries with existing qualifications would improve the matters.

The 'cutting edge' is a very vague statement about the lowest level functionaries of a vast system of administration. In the discussions at the conference, an attempt was made to give it a concrete expression saying that it refers to the behaviour of such persons as a customs clerk, a postal stamp vendor, a bus conductor, a railway booking office clerk, a police constable, a tax-collector, a receptionist etc. etc. Notwithstanding the enormous tasks that people in these posts carry under pressures over the length and breadth of the country, there is a widespread impression that they are discourteous, corrupt, and sluggish in their behaviour. Quantitative studies of the extent of this unsatisfactory impression are not available as far as we know. 1

suggestion was made by the sub-group on the first subject of the Administrative Reforms Conference to carry a "sample survey designed to determine the nature and content of complaints of citizen-clientele against the unsatisfactory services provided by the Government servants". There is to be "another sample survey of the attitudes of Government Officials towards the citizen-clientele". The sub-group recommended that on the basis of these two surveys, changes should be suggested in: 1) the organisational set up; 2) in the recruitment and training of personnel; 3) in the attitudes of both the officials and the citizen clientele". Partly in pursuance of the above suggestion and partly in pursuance of a research scheme suggested by the Committee of Direction for Research, the Institute carried on a sample study of the mutual attitudes of citizens and administration in the urban and rural areas of Delhi territory.

The extent of tax evasion recently revealed by the Finance Minister of the Government of India indicates a serious state of slackness in the discharge of respective responsibilities by citizens and administrators not merely at the cutting edge level but also at higher levels. One gets the impression that the citizens and administrators are engaged in a game of outwitting each other - the citizens in evading the rules and regulations and the administrators modifying them to check the evasion. It should be further considered whether the behaviour of the persons at the cutting edge level is not a reflection of a serious malaise in administration at all levels; whether the behaviour of the 'cutting edge' level personnel could be isolated for reformation;

whether the mutual images and expectations of the citizens and administration in a developing country and a welfare-bound-state are oriented to these goals.

The contacts between citizens and administrators are many and varied in the daily life of the people in a country. These are growing in number and complexity in modern industrial urban society and welfare state but as a matter of universal experience, another process is also in evidence, namely, the widening of the distance between the citizen and government in all urban areas of the world. There are several facets of the concept of distance. The obvious one is physical distance. This is reflected in the process of centralisation and the phenomenon of referring many matters for decision at Headquarters. The other aspect of distance relates to the prestige, class and culture of the administrators and the citizens. Government service carries with it different degrees of prestige in different cultures. In countries which were subject to colonial rule for a long time and which won independence recently, there exists a high degree of prestige for government service and common people are prone to regard, from their own personal contact or hearsay, people at different levels in government service as belonging to different types of exclusive groups. The public servants are the custodians of knowledge and information denied to an ordinary citizen and as such, the government employees become distinguished superior and distant from the common man. Accessibility to him is restricted

and feared. In a low income country persons employed in white-collar jobs with fixed incomes tend to belong to a different strata of socio-economic class and the distance between the common man and public servant swells with every rise in the hierarchical status in government service. Apart from these general factors, the distance between the citizen and administrators in India in particular is enlarged by virtue of the official language of communications and transactions being different from the language of the common folk. The bulk of the people who do not know English, which is the official language, are at the mercy either of middlemen who know the language or the officials who interpret the official communiques. The fact that the language of administration is different from the language of the people contributes a great deal to the widening of the distance between the citizen and government. The people at the cutting edge make capital out of the language handicap of the common man in several ways ranging from snobbery to profiteering.

✓ Two other factors that contribute to the strained relations between citizens and administrators at the cutting edge level as well as at other levels are the widespread belief that the wheels of government machinery do not move unless they are set in motion either through the cash-greasing of the palm or through the push and pull of contact persons. While cash payment is considered to be a blatant form of corruption, the other is not very much considered so. Ideas about corruption are confused by the legal

and moral aspects of it but both citizens and administrators have inherited in different departments certain traditions of 'Mamuls', TIPS (TURN IMMEDIATE PLEASE) and commissions for out of the turn favours, for concessions or relaxation of rules as to assessments of incometax, house tax, sales tax, for issue of licences and permits etc. etc. These are considered essential to smoothen the process of administration and are classified as the "entrepreneurial" role of corruption. Whenever attempts are made to disturb the arrangement through trapping measures, the wheels stop moving or they move slowly. These anti-corruption measures react adversely upon the relations between citizens and administrators. Measures intended to counteract corruption may strain the relations between the two sides of government at the contact levels. ~~It~~ is suggested that a proper mechanism entrusted with the handling of citizens' grievances would improve the relations between citizens and administrators. This may hold out much hope provided the grievances are genuine and the handling of them is expeditious and earnest. Sometimes, however, the handling of the grievances by superior level administrators may have an adverse impact upon the lower level personnel. The latter may become hostile and act literally according to rules or withhold decisions about matters or send them up for decision or clarification, etc. All these "work-to-rule" tactics may create more serious delays and cause greater strains between citizens and administrators at the contact point.

This note on the cutting edge level is intended to point

to the inadequacies of mechanical remedies, however important they are, in transforming the regulatory into developmental administration. A more significant approach would lie in the long range methods of modification of the educational system and inculcation of professional attitudes at all levels in administration the consideration of which is beyond the scope of this paper. But the following pages contain a short account of the survey conducted with special reference to the attitudes of citizens towards corruption in public services, the role of "pull" in contacts with administration and the courtesy of officials towards citizens in general and in select departments in Delhi. The present report contains only a partial analysis of the data collected and it is specially prepared for the second session of the Administrative Reforms Conference in October 1964. The analysis and the conclusions are subject to modification in the light of a more complete examination of the data.

Corruption in Administration

Part II : Perceptions of Citizens

Introduction

Citizens' perspectives towards administration are conditioned not only by the functions the government performs, but also by their confidence in the justice and integrity among public officials. Janowitz in his study refers to this aspect as the public's belief in the "Principle Mindedness" of civil servants, and defines it thus: "By principle mindedness we mean that the administrative system operates promptly in response to individual needs without corruption, with equal and fair treatment, and without undue consideration of a person's professional agents or of his political affiliation".¹ From this he deduces a basic tenet of a clean and honest administration in a democratic political system, which is stated as follows:

✓ "For administrative behaviour to be based on democratic consent, the public must be of the general opinion that the bureaucracy is guided in its actions by a set of principles. Administrative routines, however, must take into consideration individual differences to insure adequate dealings with clients."²

The Present Study

The present study was undertaken to investigate the attitudes of the citizens in and around Delhi towards the administration in

1. Morris Janowitz, Deil Wright, and William Delany: Public Administration and the Public Perspectives Towards Government in a Metropolitan Community (Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Bureau of Government, 1958, page 45).

2. Ibid., p. 46.

the context of a democratic-welfare state ideals embodied in the Indian Constitution. The interest was focussed on the perspectives towards government in general and also in the performance of some specific government departments namely, the Postal, the Health, the Police, the Community Development Programme and the D.T.U. (i.e. the Delhi Transport Undertaking). This paper deals only with the views of the public on corruption, courtesy, pull etc. in general and the treatment of citizens in the Health and the Police Departments.

A sample of 337 male adults from the rural areas and another sample of 347 male adults from the urban areas of Delhi State were drawn on the basis of random sampling method. The information was collected by personal interviews based on a prepared questionnaire (in English and in Hindi).

General Perception of Corruption in Administration

To ascertain the general attitudes regarding corruption, the basic question asked was: "How many of the government officials would you say are probably corrupt - many of them, just a few or none at all?" About 42% in urban areas and 48% in rural areas were of the view that a majority of them were corrupt, whereas 17% of the urban and 9% of the rural samples held that about half the officials were corrupt (see Table-1). If we combine these two figures, we find that nearly 60% of the total sample (both urban & rural) felt that more than half the government officials were corrupt.

Table No.1

Percentage Distribution of the Population by their Opinion
regarding Corruption among Government Officials

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Majority are corrupt	41.5	48.1
About half "	17.3	8.9
Just a few "	19.3	15.7
None at all "	6.9	11.6
Don't know & not ascertained	15.0	15.7
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

It is also interesting to note that a small majority (7% urban; 12% rural) felt that corruption did not exist at all.

The opinions expressed by people with different levels of income and education and people belonging to different occupational groups, caste groups and age groups have also been analysed and these reveal some interesting attitudes.*

Income Groups

Income wise analysis indicated the following results. In the urban area, a very large proportion (nearly three fourths) of the people with incomes below Rs.100, as compared to 60% in the rural areas, felt that more than half the officials were corrupt. But only 50% (which is less than the total proportion) of those

* Analysis in terms of income, education and caste, does not include the views of the following as they form a very insignificant proportion, of the total sample. Income 'Rs.501-750' and 'Above Rs.750' income groups in the Rural Sample; Education "graduate" sample in rural areas; Caste "Jats" & 'other middle caste' categories in urban sample and the "Muslims" in the rural sample are not dealt with.

with incomes above Rs.300 in both the areas held this view. In the latter income groups it was noticed that roughly a third in both the areas also believed that only a few officials were corrupt. A significant variation was noticed for the rural sample in the middle income group of Rs.201-300 among whom 76% (in contrast to about 60% of the total sample) held that more than 50% of the officials were corrupt.

We find that a large percentage of the people in low income groups falling below Rs.300 hold that majority of the officials are corrupt whereas in the upper income groups i.e. ~~between Rs.301-750~~ the figure is roughly fifty percent. This may be interpreted in more than one way. For example, the lesser income group people who seldom have much experience or contact with administration entertain an exaggerated image of corruption while this picture becomes less picturesque as we reach the higher income groups. Nevertheless, it is relevant to students of democracy to note the impressions of the lower income groups because these should count for as much as the higher income groups, if not more. Further in a country with a vast illiterate and inarticulate mass of people who are enfranchised to work the democratic institutions, the faith of these lower income groups in the integrity of administration has a great significance for the future of democracy.

Educational Groups

Attitudes of people on the basis of their literacy levels revealed some interesting results, though no simple pattern could

could be traced. In the urban areas, about 56% of the illiterates and an equal proportion of those with high school education, 60% with primary education and 75% with middle school education held that more than 50% of the public officials were corrupt. Compared to this, only 45% of the urban graduate sample had expressed a similar view. However, about 30% of those with high school education and 36% of the graduates in urban areas also felt that only a few officials were corrupt. Only about one tenth of the urban sample in each of the education groups felt that none of the officials were corrupt.

In the rural areas, 50% of the illiterates and a similar percentage of those with middle school education, 73% with primary education and 60% with more than high school education considered more than half the officials to be corrupt. Only 12% of the total rural sample felt that none of the officials were corrupt, whereas this view was held by 27% of the rural sample with middle school education.

A larger proportion of the urban in contrast to rural population, irrespective of their level of education except in the primary education group, seem to think that corruption exists among government officials. The percentage of the people in rural areas who expressed that none of the officials are corrupt is on the whole larger than in urban areas. This difference in rural-urban attitudes to corruption among the illiterates or the educated may be attributed partly to the difference in the frequency of contacts to get needs satisfied through officials and partly to

the difference in the degree of knowledge, either through reading newspapers or through hearsay, about corruption among officials.

Occupational Groups

An occupation-wise analysis of the problem showed that in urban areas 74% of the skilled workers and only 45% of the unskilled workers held that more than half the officials were corrupt. About 45% of the clerical class also held this view. A high percentage (62%) of the "Professional-Managers and Proprietors" had expressed the same opinion. About one fourth of the "managers and proprietors" and an equal proportion of the clerical class were also of the view that only a few officials were corrupt.

In the rural areas, 58% of the skilled workers, farmers, "Professional-managers & proprietors" and the clerical class expressed the opinion that more than 50% of the officials were corrupt. About 64% of the unskilled workers shared the same view. Roughly one-fifth in each of the above occupational groups also said that only a few officials were corrupt, whereas this opinion went up to one third among the farmers (non-owner cultivators).

In both urban and rural areas, the 'proprietors and managers' group formed the single largest occupational group (32% urban, 42% rural). This is significant in so far as they constitute the middle class which is in all countries the bulwark of democracy. That a high percentage of this class of people hold that more than half the government employees are corrupt is not too conducive for the working of democracy.

Caste Groups

Castewise analysis also revealed some interesting attitudes. In the urban areas about 55% to 60% among the Brahmins, 'other high castes' and Harijans, about 70% of the Muslims and an equal proportion in the category of 'other low castes' considered more than 50% of the officials to be corrupt. One tenth, of the Harijans and 'other low castes' and about one fourth of Brahmins and 'other high castes' felt that very few government employees were corrupt.

In the rural areas, 62% of the Brahmins, 71% of 'other high castes' and 65% of Harijans, 57% of 'other middle castes' expressed the view that more than half the officials were corrupt. But only 50% of the Jats and 45% of 'other low castes' held the same view. Compared to one tenth in each of the other caste groups, one fourth of the Brahmins and one third of the 'other low castes' also felt that only a few officials were corrupt. It is interesting to note that 23% of the Jats had affirmed that the administrative machinery was free from corruption, whereas only about 10% belonging to other caste groups had expressed a similar degree of confidence.

It is not possible to draw any generalisation out of the data based on caste. The Jats are said to be a self reliant community and hence probably are less dependent on the administrators for getting things done. This might explain their viewing the administration more favourably. But otherwise a large number of Muslims and 'other low castes' in urban areas and a large number of Harijans, 'other high castes' and even Brahmins in rural areas

have expressed that majority of the officials are corrupt. The high costs in urban areas do not seem to share the same experience as the high castes in rural areas. In the light of the favours in healthy service etc. it may be inferred that the influence of contact arising out of caste affiliation is still persisting.

Age Groups

Age-wise analysis of the data also indicated interesting results about the perspective of corruption in the Administration. In the urban areas, 75% of the population below 25 years of age and an equal percentage of those above 55 years of age held the view that more than half the officials were corrupt. Further 61% in the '26-35' age group and only about 48% in the '36-45' and '46-55' age ranges had expressed the same view. It is significant to note that as compared to less than 15% in other age groups, about 25% of those in the '36 to 45' and '46-55' age groups considered that only a few officials were corrupt.

In the rural areas, about two-thirds of the sample in the 'below 25', '26-35', and '46-55' age groups and about half of those in the '36-45' and 'above 55' age ranges had expressed the view that more than half the public officials were corrupt.

Even if we leave aside the feelings of the older generation as of not much significance, we like to draw attention to the high proportion of the relatively young people (below 25 years age group) believing in the existence of corruption among a high percentage of officials. Analysis of other questions also

confirms a persistence in this view among this age group which deserves the notice of all interested in democracy.

✓ Low Salary and Corruption

Probing the causes for corruption, the respondents were asked whether they felt that low salary of employees was responsible for the prevalence of corruption. The opinions of the urban and rural population differed significantly. In the urban areas 38% believed that corruption was due to low salaries, while 27% did not think so. On the other hand, only 16% of the rural population attributed corruption to low salaries, while 46% felt that it was not a causative factor. This may be due to the differences in ideas as to what constitutes low salary. Since the term 'low' was not operationally defined, it is difficult to generalize about the influence of this difference of opinion.

24 Role of Intermediaries

The problem of corruption cannot be viewed in isolation. It has a close relationship to the confidence among the citizens to get services or things done through governmental agencies by their own efforts. If this confidence is lacking, people tend to approach the government either through persons known to them who could influence the people in the government or through some organisations which specialise in serving the people through their contacts with the government such as political parties, or

occupational associations or voluntary social service agencies.³

This kind of approach also may not be available for all and as such, some people resort to the offer of money for getting things done. For this reason we have also considered it necessary to ascertain the opinions of the people about the role of "contact persons", in this context. The following table contains the views of the respondents on the problem (see Table No.2).

Table No.2

Percentage Distribution of the Population as to how they would approach the Government if they had a problem

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Do it Myself	25.0	23.1
Through another person	45.8	61.1
Some organisation	0.6	0.3
Both	3.2	2.7
Other approaches	0.9	7.1
No opinion	24.5	5.4
Not ascertained	-	0.3
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

3. W.A. Robson: The Civil Service in Britain and France, The Hogarth Press, London, 1956, pp. 12-13, "The Civil Service is far from indifferent to public opinion of certain kinds. It is exceedingly sensitive to parliamentary opinion, especially that of the House of Commons. It is also highly sensitive to the views of large and powerful organizations, such as the T.U.C., the National Union of Farmers, the National Union of Teachers, or the British Medical Association. But the Service is much less sensitive to the views or feelings of ordinary citizens, partly because they are usually unorganized, and partly because, except during elections, they have less influence with Ministers. One of the weak spots

✓ As may be seen from the above table 46% of the urban and 61% of the rural population had frankly admitted that they would seek the help of influential individuals in their dealings with public officials. A very small minority in both the areas (about 3%) felt that they would approach the authorities through some organizations as well as individuals. About 7% of the rural population said that the method of approach would depend upon the nature of the problem. About one fourth of the urban sample did not express any opinion.

Some interesting results were indicated by caste-wise analysis of the problem. In the urban areas, relatively a large numbers of Brahmins (35%), and 'other high castes' (29%) said that they would approach the government officials directly. But only 16% of the Harijans and 7% of 'other low castes' had the same degree of confidence. In the matter of approaching the authorities through another person, 'other low castes' group was the single largest caste group with a high proportion (60%) believing in the necessity of 'knowing the right person'.

In striking contrast, in the rural areas, roughly 30% in the 'other high caste' and an equal proportion of the Jats and Harijans were confident of dealing with the officials without any

Footnote contd.....

of some civil servants is the tendency to regard as unimportant an incident which may have created violent indignation among a few families in a village. We - or is it they? - have become too statistical in our perception of what is important".

intermediaries. Of the Brahmins, 'other middle castes' and 'other low castes' roughly 20% expressed the same degree of confidence. Further, as compared to 60% of the Jats, Harijans and 'other high castes' groups and Brahmins, a very high proportion of the 'other middle castes' and 'other low castes' (73% in each) expressed the need for getting help from persons known to government officials with whom they had to deal.

Certain significant results were noticed when the data was analysed in terms of the age-composition of the population. About two-thirds of the urban sample in the 'below 25 years' age group felt that they would seek the help of influential persons in problems requiring governmental action, and only 15% were confident of directly dealing with the governmental agencies. In the rural areas also, about 62% of these in the said age-group felt the need of some intermediaries in approaching the authorities. Of this, 55% had expressed the need for 'knowing the right person' and another 6% felt that they would seek the help of some professional organization. For a little over one tenth of the rural youths, the method of approach would depend upon the nature of the problem. Only about a fourth of them had expressed confidence in dealing directly with the officials.

Apart from the attitude of the younger generation, about 70% of the rural sample and 50% of the urban sample above 25 years of age felt that they would seek the help of persons known to the authorities. However, it should not be immediately inferred that the rural people are prone to rely more on outside

help than the urban public, because in the urban areas on an average 25% to 35% did not express any opinion on this question. Notwithstanding this limitation, our data point out the lack of self confidence among the public at large in approaching the authorities directly. This lack of confidence in direct approach may be partly due to the ignorance of the procedures in administration.

Influence of "Political Pull"

This matter was further probed by putting the following question: "Some people think that "political pull" (or knowing the right person) plays an important part in whether the government will help a private person with some problem he has, other people don't think so. What is your opinion about it?" A majority gave an affirmative response to this question (Table 3).

Table No.3

Percentage Distribution of the Population showing whether they feel "Political Pull" is essential in approaching the authorities

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes, pull is important	54.1	69.7
Yes, sometimes "	5.5	5.0
No, hardly matter	6.9	11.0
Depends	3.2	1.8
No opinion	30.3	12.2
Not ascertained	-	0.3
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

That "political pull" had an important role to play was the opinion of 54% of the urban and 70% of the rural population, about 5% in both the areas felt it important sometimes. Only a minority (7% urban; 11% rural) had expressed the view that political pull hardly mattered. About a third of the urban population and a little over one tenth of the rural sample expressed no opinion.

Caste-wise analysis revealed that in the urban areas only about 47% of the Brahmins and 55% of 'other high castes' felt that political pull played a crucial role. Forty seven percent of the Harijans and 70% of 'other low castes' have affirmed that its importance depended on the problem on hand. It is significant to note that 63% of the Muslim population (who formed 6% of the urban sample) had not expressed any opinion, and only 32% considered that political pull would be important. The importance of 'political pull' or 'knowing the right person' was felt by 70% of the rural population irrespective of their caste to which they belonged.

Age-wise analysis indicated that 81% of the rural sample in the 'below 25 years' age group believed in the importance of 'political pull' in their dealings with the administration. About 70% in the '26-55 years' age range and 55% of those above 55 years age group shared the same view.

In the urban areas also a little over half the sample belonging to various age groups subscribed to this view. Attention

should, however, be drawn to the fact that about 30% of the urban sample in each age group said "Don't know" to this question.

The widespread popular belief in the need for 'political pull' in dealing with the public officials, whatever maybe the reason, is a limitation upon the welfare state ideology and the popularity of the democratic machinery of government. As stated earlier, the lack of confidence in the effectiveness of direct access to government officials accelerates such malpractices as corruption. That about 60% of the youth below the age of 25 in both the urban and rural areas feel diffident about the success of direct approach warrants the need for creating greater confidence among the youth in the ideology and the working for democratic welfare state.

Role of Party Leader

In this connection, the role of the political party leader as an intermediary between the citizen and administration might be of interest. As Table No.4 indicates, only 19% of the urban and 40% of the rural population felt that approaching party leaders would be helpful. In both the areas, 34% said that party leaders might not be able to help them. About 45% in the urban and 22% in the rural areas did not express any opinion on this question (Table No.4).

Table No.4

Percentage Distribution of Population indicating whether they feel party leaders would be helpful in problems requiring governmental action

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes	19.0	40.1
No	35.4	33.5
Don't know	45.0	22.3
Not ascertained	0.6	4.1
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

It appears that people do not consider that party leaders will be helpful in their dealings with the administration. In fact, as Table No.5 shows, only 16% of the urban and 18% of the rural population had actually sought the help of those leaders in problems requiring governmental action. About three fourth of the samples in both the areas had never approached them for any assistance.

Table No.5

Percentage Distribution of the Population showing whether they have sought the help of party leaders

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes	15.6	17.5
No	75.5	76.6
Don't know	8.3	4.1
Not ascertained	0.6	1.8
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

The extent of dependence on party leaders did not vary significantly among different income groups in the urban areas. But in the rural areas, roughly 30% of those in the 'Rs.201-300' and 'Rs.301-500' income groups (in contrast to less than 20% in each of the other income groups) had sought the help of such leaders.

Among the people with different levels of literacy, it was noticed that one third of the urban sample with middle school education and equal proportion of the rural sample with high school education and above, were helped by political leaders in their problems with the administration. In contrast, only less than one fifth in each of the other literacy groups in both the areas have had any such experiences.

The proportion of the urban sample in different occupations who were helped by political leaders did not show any variation from the general figure of 16% for the urban sample as a whole. In the rural areas, relatively a large number of the clerical and salesman class (34%) had approached the party leaders (compared to less than 20% in the other groups). It was also noticed that only 3% of the skilled workers in rural areas had approached the administration through the political leaders, while 97% of them have never gone to the latter.

On a castewise analysis, we found that 26% of the Harijans in urban areas, 29% of the 'other high castes' and 27% of Jats in rural areas had approached the political leaders to help solve

the problems requiring governmental action. But only less than 20% in each of the other caste groups in the respective areas had depended on such help.

Age differences also did not indicate any wide variation in the proportion of those who had sought the help of politicians.

That a large number of the people do not approach political party leaders to intercede on their behalf may be due to many reasons. First, the public may feel that politicians are not effective (or powerful) enough to influence the administration; secondly, the party leaders might not be known to the people at large or thirdly, they too might be inaccessible.

Personal Experience about "Political Pull"

We tried to find out the validity of these opinions on "political pull" by relating it to the personal experience either of themselves or of their friends. The question was: "Have you or anybody known to you had any experience which indicated that political pull helps a citizen?" When this question was asked, we found that hardly a fifth in both the urban and rural areas had any direct experience at all; while a large proportion of the sample (58% urban and 65% rural) said that they have not had any such experience, i.e. using 'political pull' to get things done. The remaining expressed no opinion. While only a minority have had any personal experience, yet the majority (60% urban, 75% rural) opined it as important. On this matter, the study made by Morris Janowitz expressed the following view: "Thus, aside

from the minority who condemned it, political pull and political favoritism were, so to speak, the advantages other persons were alleged to have in dealing with the administrative behemoth. It was viewed as a human and understandable way of coping with and adapting to complexity and impersonality. The image of political pull involved a popular conception of the bureaucracy's response to organised pressure and group representation".⁴

In the light of these conclusions of a general nature an attempt is made below to analyse the public's image regarding the extent of corruption in particular departments, namely, Health and the Police.

Health

The Department of Health is a very major and an important public service with which all cross sections of the public have wide contact at different levels. It was, therefore, considered as an important aspect of the study to ascertain the public views about the department in general and health officials in particular.

The data revealed that 37% of the urban and 36% of the rural population felt that there was corruption in general in dispensaries and hospitals. On the other hand, 34% in urban areas and 48% in rural areas held that hospitals were run justly. About 26% of the urban sample and 14% of the rural sample expressed no opinion.

4. Op. cit., page 50.

Probing this matter a little further, the respondents were asked whether they felt that health officials performed their duties in a 'non-discriminatory' manner. An analysis of the data showed that about 38% in urban and 58% in rural areas were of the view that all people were given equal and fair treatment by the health officials. But a very small minority (2% urban, 4% rural) felt that preferential treatment was obtained by 'bribing' the health officials. Others said that relatives and friends of the health officials (11% urban, 10% rural), the wealthy or the upper caste people (11% urban, 9% rural), and influential leaders (5% urban, 3% rural) received a better treatment.

Table No.6

Percentage Distribution of Population indicating whether they feel that health officials discriminate between clients

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes, all are treated equally	37.5	57.6
No, wealthy or upper caste favoured	10.9	8.6
No, influential people, leaders favoured	4.9	3.3
No, politicians favoured	-	-
No, other reasons (relatives and friends favoured)	10.9	9.5
No, people able to bribe	2.3	4.4
No, combination of 2.6 favoured	0.8	3.0
No, does not specify	0.6	1.2
Don't know	21.9	11.3
Not ascertained	<u>1.1</u>	<u>1.1</u>
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

However, about 22% in the urban and 11% in the rural areas had expressed their lack of knowledge on the matter. The reason for this may be partly due to the fact that 15% in the rural areas had never been to a government hospital.

An income wise analysis indicated the following results. In the urban areas the proportion of people who felt that "all are treated equally and fairly" fell from 46% in the case of those with incomes below Rs.50/- to 27% of the sample with incomes between Rs.301-500' and steeply down to 15% in the 'above Rs.750' range. Following the same trend, we noticed that only about 25% of the sample with low incomes (below Rs.100) felt that there was discrimination, while 60% with higher incomes (above Rs.750) shared the same view. The wealthy and the upper caste people, influential persons in the locality and the relatives and friends of health officials were generally referred to as receiving preferential treatment.

In the rural areas, a smaller number of people (47%) in the 'Rs.51-100' range felt that there was no discrimination, while another 34% were of the view that the wealthy and upper caste people, relatives and friends of health officials received preferential treatment. In contrast, two thirds in each of the other income groups held the view that health officials were fair in their dealings with the clients and only one fourth of them felt that there was discrimination.

Among the different literacy groups, a large number of the Urban sample with primary education (51%), (as compared to about one third in other groups) felt that all were treated in a 'non-discriminatory' manner. Another feature which we noticed was that at least half of those with middle school education and above referred to the wealthy and the elite receiving preferential treatment, while only one fourth of those with primary education and below shared this view. In the rural areas, only 36% of those with high school education and above believed in the "fairness" of the health officials, while nearly 60% felt that there was discrimination. On the other hand, nearly 60% of the illiterates as well as those with primary education and 70% middle school education believed that all were treated equally and fairly.

Occupation-wise analysis of the problem showed that in the urban areas, about 50% of the unskilled workers were of the view that health officials did not discriminate. In contrast, only 30% to 40% in other occupational groups held the same opinion. In the rural areas, only 45% of the farmers, as compared to 58% of the total rural sample, felt that health officials were not influenced by the status of a person in society. Different occupation groups also referred to the rich and the upper caste people, the relatives and friends of health officials to be given special treatment.

Caste differences revealed that 26% of the Harijans and 37% to 40% of other castes including Brahmins in urban areas felt that all were treated equally. But one fifth of the sample in the said caste groups held that the wealthy and the upper caste people were given preferential treatment in hospitals. In striking contrast to the above views in urban areas, a little over 60% of the Harijans, and an equal proportion of 'other low castes' and 56% of the Brahmins in rural areas felt that health officials did not discriminate. It is, however, significant to note that 17% of the rural sample belonging to 'other high caste' group held that preferential treatment was extended in return for illegal gratification.

Age differences indicated some interesting information. In the urban areas, about 50% of the sample in the 'below 25 years' age group felt there was discrimination, whereas roughly 40% in other groups held the same view. Further one fifth of the youths referred to the 'relatives and friends' of the health officials as receiving favourable treatment in government hospitals.

In the rural areas, about 50% in the 'below 25' and 26-35' age groups were of the opinion that all were treated fairly, while a little over 60% of those in other age groups (above 35 years) shared the same view.

The above analysis indicates broadly that "bribe" is not a significant factor in the relations of the people to the health officials; but the bulk of the sample indicated preferential treatment for the relatives and friends of health officials, and for the wealthy and upper caste groups. Behind the latter opinion lies the class and caste complex in the matter of preferential treatment. This might be partly due to the fact that health officials by and large belong to these class and caste groups. Attention may be drawn to the favourable opinion expressed by a larger percentage of the rural as against the urban sample. This may be attributed to the high level of expectation of service from the health officials among the urban people.

Police

People's views on corruption in the Police Department which is the custodian of law and order is of special interest. Our data as given in Table No.7 indicates that while a large percentage of the public do not have a high opinion of the Police Department, there is a large percentage of the people in urban areas who said that they don't know.

Table No.7

Percentage Distribution of Population by their opinion regarding the prevalence of corruption in Police Department

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes, (there is corruption)	51.6	54.9
No	7.8	16.6
Qualified - depends	-	0.3

Don't know	40.5	27.0
Not ascertained	-	1.2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Number	347	337
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Fifty two percent of the urban and fifty five percent of the rural population felt that there was corruption in the police department. Only about 8% in the urban and 17% in the rural areas said "No". About 41% of the urban sample and 27% of the rural sample in the rural areas had no knowledge on this matter. This might partly be due to the fact that three fourth of the urban as well as the rural samples have not had any personal experience with the local police. Those persons who have no opinions on this question, may no doubt tilt the scales. However, one cannot apportion this inarticulate section to either side exclusively. Much might be said in both sides as to their reactions. Even assuming that the "Don't know" category would have denied the prevalence of corruption in the Police Department the proportion of those who have said that corruption exists in the Department has to be considered quite high.

Some of the explanations given in support of their~~ir~~ belief in the prevalence of corruption among the Police were 1) "Police want or need more money (4% each in urban and rural areas)" 2) "they will not act unless they receive a bribe" (8% urban, 10% rural), 3) "common knowledge, everybody knows they take bribe" (14% urban, 11% rural), 4) "more opportunities or temptation" (1% urban, 5% rural) and 5) "they would let a culprit go free if they receive a bribe" (1% urban, 5% rural).

The only major variation noticed among different income groups in urban areas was in the case of those with incomes above Rs.750, of whom 65% felt that the Police Department was corrupt. In the rural areas a large proportion (68%) in the 'Rs.301-500' income range as compared to 55% in each of the other income groups held the same view. It was also noticed that one fourth of the rural sample in the Rs.101-200 and Rs.301-500 ranges felt that the Department was free from corruption.

On the basis of literacy levels we found that in the urban areas, the illiterates and those with middle school education differed significantly in their perception of corruption from other groups. About 40% of the illiterates and as much as 68% of those with middle school education believed that corruption was prevalent among the Police. In the rural areas, in contrast to about 50% in other groups, 68% with primary education held the same view. It is also significant to note that 24% of the rural sample with middle school education and 32% with High School education had expressed complete confidence in the integrity of the personnel in the Police Department.

An occupation-wise analysis showed that 62% of the 'Professional managers and proprietors' group and 41% of the clerical class in the urban areas and 69% of the farmers in rural areas considered the Police Department to be corrupt. The other occupational groups in the urban and the rural areas did not differ significantly from the general average for the respective areas given in Table No.7.

Compared to at least half the urban sample in different caste groups, 70% of 'other low castes' and only 26% of the Muslims said that Police Officials were corrupt. As regards the views of the Muslims it should be noted that 58% of them did not express any opinion. In the rural areas 63% of 'other low castes' 61% of 'other high castes' and only 47% of Brahmins as against half of those in other caste groups considered the police as corrupt. Of those belonging to 'other high castes' in rural areas, 29% also held that the Department was free from this evil. As regards the rural Brahmin sample, it should be noted 41% had expressed lack of knowledge on the matter.

Age-composition of the population revealed that in the urban areas 60% in the 'above 55 years' group felt that the department was corrupt in contrast to about 50% in other age groups who shared the same view. In the rural areas, 71% in the 46-55 age group and 41% in the 'above 55' group differed significantly from the general average of 55% who felt that corruption was prevalent in the Police Department. It should also be mentioned that only 15% in the '46-55' age range and as much as 42% in the 'above 55' group (as compared to 27% of the rural sample in general) had not expressed any opinion on this question. Particular reference has to be made to the opinion of the below 25 age group on this question. About 55% of the urban and 62% of the rural sample in the said age group were of the view that corruption was prevalent in the Police Department and only 6% of

the urban and 17% of the rural youths expressed confidence in the integrity of the Police Officials.

Leaving aside the inarticulate section of the sample, the affirmative responses of at least half the public in both the areas indicates the lack of communication between the Police and the Public. That their views are based not on any personal experience is also clear. In the absence of such a communication public esteem of the Police personnel can never be built up.

This public image regarding corruption in the Police Department could perhaps be usefully correlated with the opinion about the kind of job done by the police. The respondents were asked whether "the police are doing a poor, fair, good or very good job?" (Table No.8).

Table No.8

Percentage Distribution of Population by their opinion regarding the kind of job done by the Police

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Poor	36.3	23.7
Fair	19.9	12.5
Good	16.4	50.1
Very good	1.2	3.6
Don't know	25.9	9.2
Not ascertained	0.3	0.9
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

In the urban areas, 16% felt the performance of the Police was good, about 20% fair and barely 1% very good. On the other

hand, in the rural areas, 50% had said the police were doing a good job, 13% fair and about 4% very good. About one fourth of the rural and a little over one third of the urban population have expressed the feeling that work done by the Police was poor.

An interesting fact emerges from the analysis. The view of the urban population seems to establish that a high degree of corruption is accompanied by low efficiency of performance. The rural population, however, appears to judge these two aspects quite distinctly, and does not seem to think that there is a relationship between efficiency and integrity. One possible explanation for this may be that the rural people tend to condone the corrupt police officials if they do their job well. Some of the problems for which they seek the help of the police are the arrest of unruly elements (poachers or poultry thieves) in the villages, settlement of minor disputes and the like. In such disputes, the police seem to help them in arriving at a compromise in return for small illegal gratification thus saving their expenses of litigation. There is obviously a difference in the perception of what is 'good', 'fair' and 'poor' between the urban and the rural sample.

Corruption in Assessment & Collection of Levies

In the assessment and collection of levies also while a large number of people felt that the taxation authorities were not honest, there is a large percentage of respondents in urban areas who expressed no opinion.

Table No.9

Percentage Distribution of Population by their opinion regarding the prevalence of corruption in the assessment and collection of Levies

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes (there is corruption)	37.2	44.5
No (there is no corruption)	16.4	29.7
No opinion	45.5	24.3
Not ascertained	0.9	1.5
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

As may be seen from the table, about 37% in the urban areas and 45% in the rural areas had said that tax officials were corrupt. This large percentage in the rural areas might be accounted for by the fact that most of the village people have to pay land tax which they could not evade except by unfair means in collusion with tax collectors; and the payment of 'mamuls' is a universal phenomenon in the rural areas. About 16% of the urban and 30% of the rural population felt that tax officials were honest. It is, however, to be noted that nearly 46% in the urban areas and 24% in the rural areas did not express any opinion on this question. In the urban areas nearly 60% of the sample did not come within the taxable income groups, and hence they might not have had any occasion to deal with the revenue authorities and for the salaried classes, tax is assessed and collected at the source and as such there would have been no occasion to feel directly with tax collectors. Under these circumstances, the opinions expressed must be considered to be based upon indirect knowledge and as such, may be of less value than those based upon direct knowledge.

Attitudes of the Public towards individual officials

Even though the public accepts political pull as significant and corruption to be widespread, they seem to rate the contacts with individual officials favourably.

Table No. 10

Percentage Distribution of Population indicating the level of satisfaction in their dealings with public employees

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Poor	18.4	15.4
Fair	40.6	15.1
Good	23.6	54.6
Very good	2.6	2.7
Don't know	13.6	8.6
Not ascertained	1.2	3.6
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

In our study, about 41% of the urban population have said that their personal dealings were 'fair', 24% said 'good' and only 18% said 'poor'. The corresponding figures for the rural areas were 15% 'fair', 55% 'good' and 15% 'poor'. There is no evidence here of widespread discontentment. Popular belief in the importance of political favouritism does not appear to be in conflict. With a higher level of satisfaction about personal dealings with public officials.

Attitudes towards behaviour of officials

The public's general image about the behaviour of the public

officials is also not affected by their belief in the prevalence of corruption and political pull. The majority of the people (54% urban, 70% rural) felt that the health officials who discriminated between clients were nevertheless courteous. Only 26% in urban and 20% in rural areas had said that their behaviour was far from satisfactory.

Table No. 11

Percentage Distribution of Population showing their attitudes concerning courtesy of Health Officials.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes, behaviour is very good.	9.5	11.0
Yes, behaviour is good.	44.7	58.8
No, behaviour is poor or discourteous.	20.5	15.1
No, very discourteous or rude.	1.7	3.3
Depends - sometimes good, sometimes bad.	2.0	1.2
Other critical.	2.3	1.8
Other supportive.	1.1	-
Don't know.	10.7	4.7
Not ascertained.	<u>7.5</u>	<u>4.1</u>
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

As in the case of health officials, a large number of rural population (as compared to the urban public) seem to be more satisfied with the relations of the police officials to the public.

Table No. 12

Percentage Distribution of the Population by their attitudes concernign courtesy of Police Officials.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes, courteous. :	30.0	61.1
Discourteous.	42.9	28.2
Qualified - depends.	0.3	0.3
Can't say.	26.8	9.5
Not ascertained.	<u>-</u>	<u>0.9</u>
Number	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

Sixty percent in the rural areas had expressed the view that the police officials were courteous and only 28% said they were discourteous. On the other hand, only 30% of the urban population were satisfied with the police officials' behaviour and 43% felt that they did not extend courtesy that is normally expected of them. Twenty seven percent in urban and ten percent in the rural areas have no opinion on the behavioural pattern of the police officials.

In this connection an attempt is made to find out whether there is any difference in the image of the public about the behaviour of the persons employed in government as against private agencies. As the Table No. 13 indicates, no valid inference could be drawn from the data for, a larger percentage of the population have not expressed any definite view.

Percentage Distribution of Population by their attitudes
concerning courtesy of Public and Private employees

Table No. 13

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Govt. Employees more courteous.	19.6	41.8
Private.	18.4	12.2
No opinion.	59.9	30.0
Both treat alike.	1.2	13.3
Not ascertained.	<u>0.9</u>	<u>2.7</u>
Number.	<u>347</u>	<u>337</u>

The question asked was: "Would you say that generally you get more courteous service and attention in dealing with governmental employees or in dealing with the employees of private companies?"

The responses indicated that in the urban areas 20% felt that government employees were more courteous whereas 18% held the view that private employees were more courteous and 1% said that both were alike. On the other hand, 42% of the rural population were of the opinion that government officials were more courteous and only 12% had a favourable impression about employees of private companies, while 13% did not find any difference between them. About 60% in the urban and 30% in the rural areas did not express any opinion. This may be because they have no personal experience with either of the services. Further, the larger percentage of the rural people in contrast to the urban public who feel that the Government servants are more courteous might be due to the fact that the farmer's dealings are mostly with public officials,

particularly the community development officials who are specially trained in the extension service techniques.

There is thus no indication of widespread dissatisfaction with the behavioural pattern of government officials.

Administration's concern for Public Opinion:-

But the public seem to make a clear distinction between the government as an institution and the officials as its functionaries. A large number of the people (87% urban, 67% rural) were of the opinion that the views of the common man were not taken into account in the formulation of policies by the government. Only 5% of the urban and 26% of the rural samples disagreed with this view.

In contrast to the above view wherein government is viewed as an institution, the reactions of the public to the statement "Public officials really care quite a lot about what people like me think," reveals a difference in the attitudes between rural and urban sample. Fifty three percent of the rural sample credited the officials with a response for the views of the common man whereas only thirty five percent of the sample in the urban areas felt this way. Thirty nine percent in the rural areas and fifty percent in the urban areas were of the opinion that the officials did not take into account the views of the common man. A small minority in both the areas (7% rural, 14% urban) did not express any opinion.

Conclusion:-

The present study is only a partial analysis of a part of the survey results on the mutual perceptions of citizens and administrators in Delhi specially prepared for the Administrative Reforms Conference. The conclusions therefore are tentative and would be later modified in the light of a more comprehensive analysis of the whole data.

Specific conclusions pertaining to each aspect of analysis are given in the body of the report and as such are not summarized here. Here a few highlights indicated by the present survey are mentioned.

(There is no doubt that a large percentage of the people in both urban and rural areas, either on the basis of direct experience or on hearsay impressions, feel that corruption exists among public officials, that contacts through inter-mediaries are more helpful than direct approach, that favours are shown by officials to relatives, to friends, to high caste and high income groups of people. Whatever explanations may be tendered in extenuation of the prevalence of this phenomena, one must confess that the infant democracy in India has to go a long way before it can lay claim to have established a democratic tradition in its administration particularly in the relations of the public servants with the public. From this point of view the lack of confidence expressed by the younger age groups needs specially to be noted. While the form of government is democratic, the servants who work the governmental machinery do not

inspire confidence in the public about integrity, fairplay and courtesy to the citizens. This is evident from the questions on corruption, role of contact persons, party leaders, professional or other organizations in public dealings with the government. One serious limitation on the validity of any generalization of this kind is the large percentage of people who expressed no opinion on certain questions asked.) The survey being first of its kind is intended to educate ourselves in ascertaining the citizens' reactions and responses with a view to modify administration's approaches, communications and relations with the citizens! Much remains to be done in these directions. In particular, we like to draw attention to the very minor role played by organized public opinion. Prof. W.A. Robson aptly remarks, "The Civil Service comes into frequent contact with the groups which exist; it feels their influence and hears their highly articulate demands."⁵ He asks the question, "But what about the interests which are not organized and not articulate?"⁶ and later on observes, "It is a poor conception of democratic administration which considers that the benefits of government shall go mainly to the most powerful and vociferous groups."⁷

5. The Civil Service in Britain and France: op. cit. P. 13.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

He suggested that the Civil Service must be completely integrated in the community if the spirit of democracy is to permeate administrative process. Three practical suggestions given to achieve this object are:-

1. the composition of the Civil Service should be such as to be by and large representative of the diverse groups and classes in the community.
2. the communication between the governors and the governed should be more imaginative, effective and continuous and;
3. the encouragement of widespread participation by a large part of the "lay public," i.e. who are neither professional politicians or civil servants, in the business of government not merely at the top levels and in the recommendatory roles but at all levels and in the evaluation roles.

Some steps are no doubt taken in these directions but these obviously do not seem to have made much impact. While the results of the survey need not be interpreted as alarming or cynical because old traditions die hard and new ones take time to take roots, this is however no time for complacency because the infant democracy needs nourishment of various kinds for it to grow and in the words of Pericles, "eternal vigilance is the price for liberty.")

Part III: Perceptions of Officials

Government officials were also interviewed to ascertain their views on corruption and also their opinion of what citizens think of corruption among public officials. For this purpose, the Postal, the Police, the Health, the Community Development departments and the Delhi Transport undertaking were taken for the Survey. A sample of 220 officials (106 urban, 114 rural) belonging to these departments was drawn. The information was collected by interviewing the officials based on a prepared questionnaire. The sample is small and the conclusions indicated are based on the opinion expressed by the respondents in the sample.

Corruption in Government Departments in general:-

Both in urban and rural areas the officials interviewed felt that government servants were corrupt, though they differed in their views regarding the extent of its spread. Only a very small minority expressed complete confidence in the integrity of the Administration. As Table No. 1 indicates, one fifth of the urban sample and about one-third of the rural sample felt that more than half the government officials were corrupt. Those who considered the Administration to be free from corruption formed a small minority (4% urban, 11% rural).

Table No. 1

Percentage Distribution of officials by their opinion regarding prevalence of corruption among public officials in general.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
None are corrupt.	3.8	10.5
Very few, less than 10% corrupt.	17.0	27.2
One fourth to one third are corrupt.	12.2	11.4
About half are corrupt.	8.5	7.9
Over 50% upto 75% corrupt.	3.8	14.9
Almost all corrupt.	6.6	8.8
Indicates corruption but not the percent.	24.5	8.8
Don't know.	20.8	10.5
Not ascertained.	<u>2.8</u>	<u>-</u>
Number	<u>106</u>	<u>114</u>

Seventeen percent in urban and 27% in rural areas said that only a few officials (less than 10%) were corrupt. About one fourth of the officials in urban areas and one tenth of those in rural areas admitted the prevalence of corruption without indicating the extent of its spread. The remaining expressed no opinion.

Officials' view of the Public Image of Corruption:-

An attempt was made to gather information about the officials' view of the public image regarding corruption in the Administration in general. The question posed was, "What

percent of the public do you think would say that officials in your position are corrupt?"

Table No. 2

Percentage Distribution of officials according to their view of public image regarding corruption in Administration.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
All or almost all the public.	5.7	1.8
Over 50% but not more than 75% of the public.	2.8	3.5
25% to 50% of the public.	11.3	3.5
Less than 25% of the public.	18.9	28.1
None would say officials are corrupt.	34.9	56.1
Don't know what the public's views are.	21.7	7.0
Not ascertained.	<u>4.7</u>	<u>-</u>
Number	<u>106</u>	<u>114</u>

As the data shows, 56% of the officials in rural areas and 35% in the urban areas held that no member of the public would say that ^{they} were corrupt. Only a small minority of the total sample (10% urban; 5% rural) felt that more than half the public would doubt the integrity of officials in their position. About 28% of the officials in urban areas and 19% in the rural areas expressed the opinion that less than one fourth of the public would question the integrity of public officials. A little over one fifth of the urban sample and about a tenth of the rural sample did not

know what the public's views would be on this question. The officials in rural areas expressed a greater measure of expectation of public confidence in their integrity as compared to the officials in the urban areas.

Corruption in each of the Departments:-

Turning from this general response regarding corruption in administration, the officials were asked, "What percent of employees in your own agency would you say are corrupt?" The findings pertaining to each department are given below. (Refer Table N. 3).

Postal:- About 69% of the postal officials in rural areas and 21% in urban areas felt that their department was free from corruption. A little over 10% of the rural sample and 58% of the urban sample were of the view that only a few (less than 10%) postal officials were corrupt. A small minority (5% urban, 13% rural) expressed doubts about the integrity of about 30% of the officials in their departments. It will be clear that this response indicating very little corruption among Postal Officials is in line with the commonly held view that the postal service is relatively free from this malaise. This may be because of the limited scope for malpractices in the Postal Department or it may be due to the inherited tradition of freedom from corruption. It is also significant to note that a larger number of Postal officials in rural areas have expressed greater confidence in department's personnel than the urban sample.

Table No. 3

Percentage Distribution of officials by their perception of corruption in their own departments.

	Postal		Police		Health		Community Development		D.T.U.	
	Urban %	Rural %	Urban %	Rural %	Urban %	Rural %	Urban %	Rural %	Urban %	Rural %
None are corrupt.	21.0	68.8	14.7	8.8	16.7	38.8	-	63.6	-	-
Very few, less than 10% corrupt.	57.9	12.5	23.5	29.4	19.4	6.4	-	21.2	29.4	-
1/4th to 1/3rd are corrupt.	5.3	12.5	17.7	8.8	2.8	-	-	-	5.9	-
About half corrupt.	-	-	2.9	5.9	2.8	6.4	-	3.0	11.8	-
Over 50% upto 3/4th corrupt.	-	-	-	11.8	-	6.4	-	-	5.9	-
Almost all.	-	-	5.9	5.9	5.5	6.4	-	-	11.8	-
Indicates there is corruption but not the %.	5.3	-	14.7	11.8	8.3	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know.	10.5	6.2	17.7	17.6	41.7	35.5	-	12.1	35.2	-
Not ascertained.	-	-	2.9	-	2.8	-	-	-	-	-
Number	19	16	34	34	36	31	-	33	17	-

Police:- Police officials seem to entertain greater doubts about the integrity of the personnel in their own department. Only about 9% in rural and 15% in urban areas held that all the police officials were honest in their public dealings. About 30% of the police officials in rural areas and 25% in urban areas were of the view that only a few were corrupt, while 9% of the rural and 18% of the urban samples felt that one fourth to one third of them were not honest. The view that more than half the police officials were corrupt was held by 24% of the Police officials in rural areas and 9% in urban areas. A little over one tenth of the rural as well as the urban police officials admitted the prevalence of corruption in their department, though they were not certain of its extent. The remaining expressed lack of knowledge on the matter.

Health:- It is not possible to draw any conclusions on the basis of the health officials' perception of corruption in their department, as a sizable section of the health officials (36% rural, 42% urban) did not express any opinion. Among those who gave a positive response, 37% in rural areas and 17% in urban areas felt that the Health Department was free from corruption. About 6% of the rural and 20% of the urban samples held that only a few health officials might be corrupt. Twenty percent of the health officials in rural areas and eight percent in urban areas expressed the opinion that more than half the officials in the Department were corrupt.

Community Development:- A majority of the C.D. personnel (65% rural) asserted that their department was free from corruption, while 21% held that very few (less than 10%) were corrupt. Only one official interviewed held the view that about 50% of the officials in the C.D. department were corrupt. The remaining expressed no opinion.

Delhi Transport Undertaking:- Employees of the D.T.U., formed about 16% of the urban sample. Excluding 35% of those who did not express any opinion on this question, the rest of the sample (nearly 65%) admitted that corruption was prevalent in the D.T.U., though they differed in their image regarding its extent. Of this, 29% felt that only a few officials were corrupt while an equal proportion were of the view that more than half the D.T.U. employees indulged in malpractices. About 6% held that one fourth to one third were corrupt.

"Influence of Political Pull" :-

At attempt to relate the officials' belief in corruption in the administration to the influence of "political pull" in getting things done, was made for two reasons. First, officials' views might indicate the extent of the Administration's response to organised group pressure. Secondly, it might also reveal the extent to which they themselves as citizens depended on "contact persons" for their personal problems requiring governmental action. The same question relating to "Political Pull" which was posed to the public was also asked of the officials. Data shows that

an overwhelming majority of the officials are of the view that "political pull" has an important role in the citizens' dealings with the administration.

Table No. 4

Percentage Distribution of Officials by their opinion regarding the role of "political pull" in their dealings with citizens.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes, very important.	5.7	23.7
Yes, important.	61.3	49.1
No, of very little importance hardly matters.	2.8	9.6
No, not important at all.	15.1	8.8
Yes, at some levels, in some respects, or for some persons.	1.9	2.6
Uncertain.	0.9	0.9
Refuses to say.	3.8	1.8
Don't know.	8.5	3.5
Not ascertained.	—	—
Number	<u>106</u>	<u>114</u>

As Table No. 4 indicates, 6% of the urban and 24% of the rural officials felt that "political pull" played a very important role in their dealings with the public, while 61% of the officials in the urban areas and 49% in rural areas considered it to be important. Combining these two figures, it was found that two thirds of the urban sample and three fourths of the rural sample felt "knowing the right person" would be necessary for the citizens

in approaching the public officials. Only about one fifth of the officials in urban as well as in rural areas were of the view that "political pull" hardly mattered.

Though a majority of the officials believed that the administration yielded to pressure exercised by organized groups and 'contact persons,' only a minority have had any personal experience wherein they sought the help of such intermediaries to intercede on their behalf. The question asked was: "Have you had any experience yourself which indicated that "political pull" helps one to get service from the government? From Table No. 5, it could be seen that a very large proportion of the sample (82% urban, 75% rural) had no experience with 'political pull' in their dealings with the administration.

Table No. 5

Percentage distribution of officials according to their personal experience with "political pull."

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes, general response only.	4.7	5.3
Yes, specific experiences.	8.5	14.0
No.	82.1	75.4
Don't know.	-	-
Refusal to answer.	3.8	1.8
Not ascertained.	<u>0.9</u>	<u>3.5</u>
Number	<u>106</u>	<u>114</u>

A very small minority (5% each in urban and rural areas) gave a general response without indicating the nature of the problem wherein "contact persons" successfully influenced the administration. About 9% of the officials in urban areas and 14% in rural areas cited specific personal experiences involving "political pull."

Officials' advice to the public:-

Though the officials consider "political pull" to be important in the private citizen's dealings with the administration, it appears that they would rather advise the citizens to develop a sense of self-confidence and approach the public officials directly in solving problems requiring governmental action. The following question was asked: "In general, if you were to advise a citizen who had a problem and needed governmental help, would you advise him to go personally to the department concerned, or to get the assistance of a person who was on friendly terms with the governmental official or agency concerned? As Table No. 6 shows, about 60% of the officials in urban areas and 50% in rural areas said that they would encourage the private citizens to deal with the authorities personally without recourse to intermediaries. But 31% in urban and 42% in rural areas were of the view that they would advise them to seek the help of influential persons known to the officials with whom they might have dealings.

Table No. 5

Percentage Distribution of Administrative Officials by their opinion regarding the method of approaches they would suggest to the citizens.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Go personally.	58.5	50.8
Get assistance from others.	31.1	42.1
Both.	-	0.9
Others.	-	0.9
Uncertain.	5.7	1.8
Don't know.	3.8	2.6
Not ascertained.	<u>0.9</u>	<u>0.9</u>
Number	<u>106</u>	<u>114</u>

A large number of urban officials have expressed themselves in favour of direct approach whereas the opinion in rural areas is almost equally divided on this question. This difference in the counsel of officials between urban and rural areas is noteworthy. The urban officials by and large suggest an approach of self reliance while the rural officials still consider the role of contact persons to be important.

Officials relations with the Public:-

The officials do not seem to feel that the prevalence of corruption comes in the way of their cordial relations with the public. Our data showed that a overwhelming majority of the sample (86% urban, 96% rural) felt that their relations with the

public were "good." About 12% in urban areas and 3% in rural areas said it was "very good."

Table No. 7

Percentage Distribution of Administrative officials of their opinion regarding their relations with the public.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Very Good.	12.2	2.6
Good.	85.8	95.6
B . .	-	1.8
Very Bad.	-	-
Not sure.	1.0	-
Don't know.	<u>1.0</u>	<u>-</u>
Number.	<u>106</u>	<u>114</u>

Administrative Behaviour:-

Probing the officials' relations with the public a little further, the following question was posed to ascertain the officials' perception of the public image about their behaviour. "What percent do you think of the public would say officials like you are courteous in their dealings with the Public?"

Table No. 8

Percentage Distribution of Administrative Officials by their opinion regarding the public perception of officials' courteous behaviour.

<u>Public</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
All or almost all.	51.9	69.3
Over 50% but not more than 75%.	13.2	8.8
25% to 50%.	8.5	5.3
Less than 25%.	7.5	3.5
None.	1.0	-
Don't know.	15.1	12.3
Not ascertained.	<u>2.0</u>	<u>0.8</u>
Number.	106	114

As Table No. 8 shows sixty nine percent of the officials in rural areas and 52% in urban areas felt that the entire public would consider all the officials to be courteous; while 13% of the urban and 9% of the rural samples held that over 50% of the public would consider all the officials to be courteous. A little over one tenth in both areas (15% urban, 12% rural) did not express any opinion on the question.

Administration and the Ordinary Citizens:-

In a democracy the views of the common man should find way to the seats of authority making policy decisions. The views of the common man expressed through professional or occupational organisations formed for specific purposes may sometimes be

communicated to those in authority. "But where there is no pressure from an organized group," writes Professor W.A. Robson, "Civil servants may too easily assume that all is well and nothing need be done."¹ It may not be possible even for organized groups, to exercise much impact unless they develop powerful lobbying techniques. The government should therefore so conduct itself that no group develops a feeling of neglect or isolation, nor be indifferent/^{to}unorganized public opinion. Since the officials are the functionaries of the government, they are in a far better position to assess the extent to which the views of ordinary citizens influence the decisions of the government.

In this context, the officials were asked to give their opinion on the following statement:

"The average citizen does not have much say about what the government does." As can be seen from Table No. 9 below, 53% of the urban sample and 46% of the rural sample agreed with this view.

Table No. 9

Percentage Distribution of officials by their opinion regarding the citizens' views on what the Government does.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Agree.	52.8	45.6
Disagree.	40.6	50.0
Unsure.	5.7	3.5
Not ascertained.	<u>0.9</u>	<u>0.9</u>
Number	<u>106</u>	<u>114</u>

1. W.A. Robson: Civil Service in Britain - op. cit. P. 13.

On the other hand, 40% of the officials in urban areas and 50% in rural areas felt that the views of the ordinary citizens exerted an impact on governmental actions. Thus officials in both the areas are divided roughly half and half on this question.

Closely related to this issue is the question of citizen - administrator relationship in the day to day working of the administration. Earlier analysis showed that "political pull" played a significant role. This is with reference to the citizen's specific problems requiring administrative action. But the officials' response to the statement that "public officials really care quite a lot about what the ordinary citizen thinks," indicated that they are responsive to the views of the common man on general issues facing the community.

Table No. 10

Percentage Distribution of officials by their opinion regarding the influence of common man's views on the Administration.

	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Agree.	65.1	56.1
Disagree.	28.3	38.6
Unsure.	5.7	5.3
Not ascertained.	<u>0.9</u>	<u>-</u>
	106	114
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

As Table No. 10 shows, 65% of the officials in urban areas and 56% in rural areas agreed with the statement; while 28% of the urban sample and 39% of the rural sample did not agree with this statement.

By way of summing up the survey results of the officials' sample we may say:-

1. The attitude of officials towards corruption in general is much less sharp than that of the citizens.
2. When questioned about corruption in their own departments, the majority of the officials in the Police and the D.T.U. considered that corruption was widespread in their departments whereas the community development and Postal officials felt that there was little of it in their departments. A considerable number of the health officials did not express any opinion; among the remaining, the majority were of the opinion that there is little corruption in the department.
3. A considerable percentage of officials also view political pull to be important. However the percentage of officials who had direct experience of political pull in their own affairs is small.
4. There is a marked difference between the urban and rural officials in their advice to the citizens towards the use of direct approach as against approach through contact persons in that the former is more in favour of direct approach than the latter.
5. An overwhelming percentage of officials perceive that public's relations with the administration are either good or very good.

6. A large percentage of officials feel that the public thinks that the public servants are courteous and well behaved towards the public.
7. As regards the impact of common man's views on the administration, the officials' views are evenly divided. But about the concern of public servants for the views of the common man, more than half the officials (65% in the urban sample and 56% in the rural sample) seem to pay a lot of attention for public's reactions and responses to their activities.

Conclusion:-

On the whole, therefore, the officials seem to have a more satisfactory opinion about their own actions and behaviour towards the citizens. However, there are, even among the officials, some who are not satisfied in these respects. Attempts should therefore be directed to shake the complacency of those who are satisfied and examine the areas of dissatisfaction of the rest so that the gulf between mutual images of the officials and the citizens is bridged and both obtain maximum satisfaction with each other. This is necessary in view of the fact that officials of certain departments are also in the relationship of citizens to the departments other than their own. The citizen-ruler complex in a democracy is mutually interacting and as such a better rapport should be established between the two sides of government, namely citizens and officials.

To conclude: "The practical problem in many countries," in the words of Prof. Robson, "is to introduce a sufficient degree of improvement in the civil service to persuade the citizens that the image they have hitherto had of the civil servant was biased and therefore unjust. To enhance the public esteem in which civil servants and politicians are held is a difficult operation, to which social psychologists, sociologists and political scientists might well give their attention."²



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2. W.A. Robson: The Governors and the Governed,
George Allen and 1964,
p. 21.